



Rock Point Church

Bill Bush | 12.8.25

**Big Idea: Fasting is about presence, not pressure.**

### **Matthew 6:16-18 (NLT)**

<sup>16</sup> “And when you fast, don’t make it obvious, as the hypocrites do, for they try to look miserable and disheveled so people will admire them for their fasting. I tell you the truth, that is the only reward they will ever get. <sup>17</sup> But when you fast, comb your hair and wash your face. <sup>18</sup> Then no one will notice that you are fasting, except your Father, who knows what you do in private. And your Father, who sees everything, will reward you.

### **Fasting...**

- Is expected, but doesn't mean what we think.
- Is prayer with your whole body.
- Exposes the coping mechanisms we pretend we don't have.
- Exchanges self-reliance for God-reliance.

### **How to go fast:**

- Identify your comfort idol.

- Refrain from it for a period of time.
- Replace the comfort with communion. Don't just subtract—substitute.
- Expect resistance.

## GROUPS QUESTIONS

1. What stood out to you most in this week's message, and why?
2. What is the thing you reach for first when you're stressed, tired, lonely, bored, or insecure—and what does that reveal about where you naturally turn for comfort?
3. How does fasting help shift your attention away from distractions and back toward God's presence?
4. In what ways have you seen fasting (or the idea of fasting) become more about spiritual pressure or performance than honest surrender?
5. Which coping mechanism from the list (scrolling, comparison, emotional eating, caffeine, busyness, etc.) resonates most with you, and what do you think gives it such a strong pull?
6. Fasting exposes cravings, insecurities, and internal noise. When those deeper layers show up, how do you typically respond, and where do you sense God inviting you to respond differently?
7. What comfort, habit, or "weight" do you think you may be holding onto that is keeping you from the freedom or intimacy with God that He wants for you?
8. Fasting is an exchange of self-reliance for God-reliance. What is one comfort idol you feel led to fast from this week, and how will you intentionally replace that comfort with communion—Scripture, prayer, worship, or silence—rather than simply removing it?